

Message Text

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43

ACTION AF-08

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R 051718Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY LOME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 989

INFO USUN NEW YORK 357

AMEMBASSY COTONOU

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

C O N F I D E N T I A L L O M E 1 7 3 2

NIAMEY FOR RDO BARON

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, TO

SUBJECT: FAREWELL CALL ON PRES. EYADEMA

REF: (A) LOME 1724, (B) STATE 190919, (C) STATE 191563,

1. PRESIDENT EYADEMA RECEIVED ME THIS MORNING FOR FAREWELL CALL. HE APOLOGIZED FOR DELAY AND REMARKED IN FRONT OF HIS PROTOCOL CHIEF THAT HE HAD NOT BEEN INFORMED OF MY REQUEST FOR APPOINTMENT. (REF A).

2. I HANDED THE PRESIDENT SECRETARY KISSINGER'S MESSAGE AND FRENCH TEXT OF THE SECRETARY'S SPEECH OF AUGUST 2 TO URBAN LEAGUE (REFS B AND C). EYADEMA EXPRESSED GRATITUDE FOR RECEIVING BOTH.

3. IN FORMAL REMARKS ACROSS HIS LARGE DESK, PRESIDENT SAID HE AND TOGOLESE APPRECIATED WHAT USG IS DOING FOR THEM. HE WANTED TO THANK ME FROM "BOTTOM OF HIS HEART" (PHRASE HE REPEATED) FOR MY OWN SERVICE AND EFFORTS HERE. EYADEMA ASSURED ME OF WARM WELCOME ON ANY FUTURE VISIT TO TOGO, WHERE HE SAID I WAS LEAVING BEHIND MANY FRIENDS FROM WHOM HE ALWAYS HAS HEARD ONLY GOOD WORDS ON MY BEHALF.

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4. PRESIDENT WAS FRIENDLY AND RELAXED OVER COFFEE AFTERWARDS.

HE EXPRESSED DESIRE TO VISIT UNITED STATES--"AFTER ELECTIONS, OF COURSE." I PROMISED TO ADVISE MY GOVERNMENT IMMEDIATELY OF HIS WISHES. HE THEN TOLD ME TOGOLESE AMBASSADOR TO U.S. KEKEH BEING REPLACED BY GOT HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR TOURISM (KANYI KODJOVI). KEKEH WAS GOOD MAN, EYADEMA SAID, BUT KODJOVI WAS DYNAMIC.

5. PRESIDENT ASKED WHETHER U.S. AMBASSADOR TO BENIN HAD RETURNED THERE. I REPLIED NEGATIVELY, BUT NOTED US-BENINOIS RELATIONS WERE IMPROVING. EYADEMA OBSERVED THAT FEBRUARY, MONTH OUR AMBASSADOR DEPARTED, WAS ALSO PEAK PERIOD IN STRAIN IN TOGOLESE-BENINOIS RELATIONS. HE SAID THAT, ALTHOUGH BENINOIS WERE AFRICANS, HE COULD NOT UNDERSTAND THEIR ATTITUDE. THEY SHOULD BE CONCENTRATING ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AS HE IS DOING, RATHER THAN POLITICAL INTRIGUE. I TOLD PRESIDENT IN THIS CONNECTION THAT EMBASSY RECENTLY RECEIVED COPY OF GOT'S THIRD FIVE-YEAR DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND WAS STUDYING IT TO SEE WHERE USG MIGHT BE COOPERATIVE. ALREADY, WE WERE CONSULTING WITH PERTINENT MINISTRIES ABOUT POSSIBILITIES FOR ASSISTING TOGO IN KEY AREAS OF FOOD PRODUCTION, FAMILY HEALTH AND HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT.

6. PRESIDENT EYADEMA CONFIRMED THAT HE WOULD BE ATTENDING COLOMBO NONALIGNED SUMMIT. I ASKED TO EXPLAIN US POLICY ON PUERTO RICO, A QUESTION OF GREAT INTEREST TO USG WHICH MIGHT ARISE AT CONFERENCE. EYADEMA SAID HE HAD JUST READ AGENDA AND THAT PUERTO RICO WAS NOT INCLUDED, BUT HE LISTENED WHILE I OUTLINED PUERTO RICO'S CONSTITUTIONAL STATUS AND STRESSED USG COMMITMENT TO RIGHT OF PUERTO RICAN PEOPLE TO SELF-DETERMINATION. I SAID EMBASSY WAS IN CONTACT WITH FOREIGN MINISTRY ON THIS ISSUE. PRESIDENT WAS ATTENTIVE, BUT ASKED NO QUESTIONS AND REITERATED ITEM DID NOT APPEAR ON COLOMBO AGENDA.

7. COMMENT: IT WAS CLEAR TO ME THAT EYADEMA, IN HIS FORMAL BUT RATHER TOUCHING REMARKS ABOUT MY TENURE HERE, WAS TRYING IN HIS WAY TO SMOOTH OVER UNCOMFORTABLE PERIOD LAST FALL WHEN EMBASSY WAS ASSOCIATED BY RUMOR WITH COMMANDANT COMLAN, WHOSE WELL-KNOWN DISSIDENCE ULTIMATELY LED TO HIS ARREST AND MURDER IN LOME MILITARY CAMP CELL. NO DOUBT ALSO THAT PRESIDENT'S CONSCIENCE IN NEED OF CLEANSING. I RESPONDED TO PRESIDENT THAT I LEAVE TOGO WITH FEELING OF TRANQUILITY AND SATISFACTION THAT U.S.-TOGOLESE RELATIONS ARE IN ORDER. THIS WAS FIRST TIME EYADEMA HAD MENTIONED

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VISITING U.S. TO ME. DEPARTMENT WILL REMEMBER THAT AMBASSADOR KEKEH APPROACHED AF ASSISTANT SECRETARY DAVIS ON THIS MID-1975. EMBASSY HAS HIGH REGARD FOR MAN EYADEMA WANTS TO APPOINT AS AMBASSADOR TO U.S. KODJOVI IS NOT CAREER DIPLOMAT, BUT HELD SUCCESSIVE POSITIONS AS CHIEF GOT ADMINISTRATOR IN THREE CIRCUMSCRIPTIONS BEFORE BEING APPOINTED TO PRESENT POSITION. HE WAS ONE OF EMBASSY'S PRIME CANDIDATES FOR INTERNATIONAL VISITOR GRANT IN 1974-75.

RAWLS

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